

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, and 7-18 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 2, 3, 5, and 6 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein.

It is respectfully submitted that the above amendments introduce no new matter within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §132. Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because it (a) places the application in *prima facie* condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise new issues requiring further search and/or consideration by the Examiner because similar subject matter was previously considered by the Examiner and thus further consideration and/or search by the Examiner is not warranted; and (c) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. For at least these reasons, entry of the present Amendment is therefore respectfully requested. Accordingly, Applicant requests reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending rejections for the reasons discussed below.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 2 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Application Publication JP 05219849 to Kato, et al. ("Kato").

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2 and 5 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection thereof moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates that claims 1, 4, and 7-18 are allowed. Applicant does not dedicate the subject matter of any canceled claim to the public and reserves the right to file a continuation application for the subject matter of any canceled claim or any subject matter disclosed but not claimed.

CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that a full and complete response has been made to the pending Office Action and respectfully submits that all of the stated grounds for rejection have been overcome or rendered moot. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the number below to expedite prosecution.

If an extension of time is necessary to prevent abandonment of this application and is not filed herewith, then such extension of time is hereby petitioned for under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a). Any fees required for further extensions of time and any fees for the net addition of claims are hereby authorized to be charged to our Deposit Account No. 14-0112. Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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